

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 29**  
**INCIDENT NO. 97-015**  
**DATE: APRIL 24, 1997      TIME: 11:00 A.M.**

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: Approximately 70,000 North Dakotans have been uprooted because either the areas where they live has been evacuated and/or their homes have been damaged by flood waters.

In the city of Leeds, some residents of the 450-plus population town were evacuated early April 24 when the Iverson Dam on Kens Creek developed a structural problem. The National Weather Service issued a flash flood warning at the request of the North Dakota Emergency Operations Center. The dam holds 560 acre feet of water and is approximately 20 feet. Benson County crews, in conjunction with the N.D. State Water Commission, were able to perform emergency repairs. The dam appears to be holding at this time. Emergency management officials requested that the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad delay train traffic until the dam was repaired. Those evacuated included Grand Forks residents who had sought shelter in Leeds. Residents were beginning to return April 24.

Red River flood waters are continuing to create problems downstream from Grand Forks as residents in Walsh and Pembina Counties prepare their homes and communities for possible inundation. On April 22, a dike in Neche Township in Pembina County broke, requiring a massive evacuation of residents in the Highway 55 area. Some of the residents refused to leave their home. The city of Drayton also experienced a dike leak, which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) was working to repair. The Red River had risen to 45.46 feet on April 24 and was expected to crest by April 24-25 at 49 feet. The river at Pembina had risen to 54.40 feet, a 1.15-foot increase during the past 24 hours.

The Red River at Grand Forks has begun a very slow fall, mainly due to reduced flows in the Red Lake River, which joins the Red River at East Grand Forks, MN. The river level on April 24 was 52.81 feet; down -0.8 feet during the past 24 hours. In Grand Forks, inundated areas include Terra International, a fertilizer plant where officials were able to conduct an

inspection on April 23 and determine up to 12,000 tons of urea may have spilled into flood waters. State health and company officials also inspected Terra International's nearby chemical warehouse where no leaks appeared to have occurred. A contractor is relocating pesticide supplies as a safety precaution. Farther downstream, the river is slowly receding. The river at Fargo was 36.90 feet April 24, down one-half foot during the past 24 hours. At Wahpeton, the river was at 17.60, a -0.60-foot drop during the past 12 hours.

Job Service North Dakota received 1,931 initial unemployment claims during April 21-22 compared to 359 during the same time period last year. The influx is due largely to the Disaster Unemployment Assistance that the agency has been authorized to offer to people who have been totally or partially unemployed as a direct result of the winter storm and flooding disaster.

The Agriculture Disaster Response Center (ADRC) continues to receive phone calls from North Dakota farmers and ranchers concerned about animal carcass disposal, livestock losses, and other issues. The ADRC received over 150 phone calls on April 22, and more than 500 calls to date.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: At Governor Schafer's request, the North Dakota Community Foundation has established the '97 Flood Relief Fund. Grants will be made available to non-profit organizations serving the needs of people directly affected by the flood disaster or for cleanup and rebuilding. Donations can be sent to the North Dakota Community Foundation at P.O. Box 387, Bismarck, ND, 58502-0387, and should be designated for the '97 Flood Relief Fund.

Farming-based organizations are also assisting with flood relief efforts. North Dakota Farmers Union has established the Farmers Union Emergency Relief Fund. Money raised will go toward rural relief efforts through appropriate agencies. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to Farmers Union Emergency Relief Fund, P.O. Box 2136, Jamestown, ND 58402-2136. Checks should be made payable to: Farmers Educational Foundation. For more information, call (800) 366-6338. North Dakota Farm Bureau has set up statewide flood relief collection sites. Items should be brought to the sites by April 28. The collection sites, which operate from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., are at the Farm Bureau/Nodak Mutual Offices in Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Jamestown, Minot, Valley City and Williston. Donors are asked to call their local office for more information or to call (701) 298-2212.

As of April 22-23, 1,356 evacuees were staying at six shelters operated by the American Red Cross. The Red Cross has sheltered a total of 4,660 flood victims. The agency also is operating eight mobile kitchens and nine fixed meal sites, where 8,200 meals were served on April 22. A total of 75,948 meals have been served to date.

In Minot, the Quentin Burdick Job Center has 100-plus students ready for volunteer work across the state. Cellular One of Minot has offered evacuees free phone use to contact families and friends, and the Minot Public Library has offered free library cards and use of three computer terminals with Internet access.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: City of Pembina officials are allowing men over 18 years of age to assist with sandbagging efforts. The city's 640-plus residents were evacuated April 22 in anticipation of flooding. The USACE is using flashboard to elevate the levee and sandbags to reinforce it. The volunteers are required to register with the Pembina County Sheriff's Office and are to leave the city by 6 p.m. If a dike failure occurs or the river level reaches 56 feet, then the volunteers must evacuate the town. Volunteers are also required to leave if flood waters inundate I-29 to the point where conventional truck traffic has been prevented. The Red River at Pembina had risen to 54.4 feet on April 24. The river is expected to crest at 58 to 59 feet by April 27-28, five feet over original predictions.

The N.D. Department of Health has four staff members on site in Grand Forks to assist state and local efforts with restoration of rural and city water supply systems.

The state and Grand Forks Emergency Management been receiving offers of help throughout the nation as neighboring counties assist flood victims living along the Red River. Area counties, including Cavalier, Nelson, Rolette, Ward, have established shelters and Flood Information Centers, and residents have taken displaced flood victims into their home. In Rolette County, for example, residents have been cooking and baking food for evacuees, who are being served at Rolla Public School.

The Department of Health has ordered 10,000 additional doses of tetanus vaccine and has made plans to send a Fargo-based environmental health practitioner to Grand Forks. Health officials also are evaluating the public health hazard posed by dead livestock.

In an effort to assist flood victims, the Health Care Financing Administration has agreed to waive several requirements concerning continued eligibility and the new application for Medicaid. In addition, referral requirements for Medicaid recipients' Primary Care Case Management Freedom of Choice will be waived.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has received \$712,912 in funds for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Center for Mental Health Services for providing crisis counseling for flood victims. DHS reports that the Pembina County Pioneer Home in Bathgate and the Borg Memorial Home in Mountain have been affected by flood waters. DHS is assisting Valley Memorial Home in Grand Forks by helping them meet payroll on April 25.

N.D. National Guard members are patrolling and repairing dikes, removing animal carcasses from waterways and then burying them, providing traffic control and operating sandbagging equipment as part of "Operation Good Neighbor." In addition, they have 15 trucks with clay on standby for dike construction. Forces are helping in Burleigh, Cass, Dunn, Emmons, Grand Forks, Grant, Kidder, Logan, McHenry, Nelson, Pembina, Richland, Ward and Traill Counties. Five missions are pending in Cass, Pembina, Ramsey and Walsh Counties. National Guard members on duty April 24 totaled 830; a cumulative of 1,425

members have assisted with flood fight efforts. The National Guard has 96 missions underway and has completed 142.

The National Guard's Public Affairs Office is working with the Grand Forks Herald to publish photos of flood-damaged areas for Grand Forks evacuees, who have been concerned about the extent of damage. The Public Affairs Office also is working to develop an internal information system for shelters so that evacuees can be provided updated information on available services and the status of flood conditions.

The U.S. Postal Service established limited service on April 22 for Grand Forks customers. Arrangements are being made to set up a temporary post office at the Grand Forks Air Force Base, which is staffed by Grand Forks Postal Service employees.

The N.D. Banking Commissioner reported that customer service telephone numbers have been established for institutions affected by flooding. The institution and telephone numbers are as follows: Community National Bank of Grand Forks, (701) 343-2345 or (800) 552-2657; First American Bank Valley, (800) 776-7373; First Bank of North Dakota, customer service -- (800) 846-4646 or hotline (888) 626-6626; First National Bank of North Dakota, customer service (800) 279-3200 or account balance information -- (701) 280-5162, (701) 280-5173, or (701) 280-5176; Norwest Bank, (800) 662-2657; Gate City Federal Savings Bank, Grand Forks Branch, (800) 423-3344; First State Bank, Buxton, Grand Forks Facility (701) 847-2600; American Federal Savings Bank, (701) 235-4248; Drayton State Bank, (701) 248-3242; Citizens State Bank of Pembina County, Pembina Facility, (701) 265-8484 for Cavalier and (701) 886-7521 for Neche; and, Grand Forks Credit Unions and North Dakota Credit Union Leagues, (800) 279-6328.

The N.D. Highway Patrol has placed more troopers on the road in an effort to discourage truck drivers from avoiding detour routes. Truckers are apparently continuing on N.D. Highway 32 instead of taking the detour to N.D. Highway 17, which has caused road damage. The Highway Patrol is also helping Department of Human Services by transporting flood-displaced, mentally ill clients, who may become violent.

N.D. State Radio Communications has sent a base station and 18 portable radios to Grand Forks responders, via a Highway Patrol trooper. The agency expects to have up to 20 radios with N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) frequency available for flood fighters on April 25.

The N.D. Civil Air Patrol (CAP) conducted a surveillance flight of the Red River, from Grand Forks to the Canadian border, for the State Water Commission on April 22. Flights on April 23 included a surveillance flight for the State Water Commission over the Devils Lake Basin. A CAP air crew also transported medical supplies to Grand Forks for the Department of Health.

Fannie Mae, a home mortgage institution, has announced mortgage relief provisions are in place for borrowers facing hardships as a result of flooding. The provisions include suspending mortgage payments for up to three months, reducing the payments for up to 18 months on a case-by-case basis, or creating longer loan payback plans.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.

8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: North Dakota residents with disaster-related damages can apply for individual assistance programs by contacting the National Teleregistration Center (NTC) at (800) 462-9029. The N.D. Department of Agriculture operates an Agriculture Disaster Response Center for farmers coping with damages and losses caused by the disaster. The toll-free number is (888) 337-8632.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the N.D. Division of Emergency Management, and volunteer relief agencies have established a donations coordination hotline, (800) 809-1450. Other volunteer donation hotlines are: American Red Cross, (800) FLOODND; the Salvation Army, (800) SALARMY; Seventh Day Adventists, (800) 381-7171; and United Methodist Council on Relief (UMCOR), (800) 814-8765.

The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The N.D. Department of Agriculture also posts flood-related information on its home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/agr/>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbm.k.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

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Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director